

EXCERPT FROM "JAPAN YEAR BOOK 1941-42"

CHAPTER XLIII

SOUTH SEA ISLANDS

UNDER JAPAN'S MANDATE

Geographical Features

The South Sea Islands mandated to Japan, numbering over 1,400, with an aggregate area of 2,148.80 square kilometers, are the Mariana, Marshall and Caroline groups, between 131° 10' and 172° 10' of east longitude and between 1° 15' and 20° 32' of north latitude. The Hawaiian Islands are to the east; the Philippines and Celebes to the west; the Bonin Islands to the north, and New Guinea to the south. Only one island among them, i.e. Guam, belongs to the United States.

The Mariana archipelago starts close to the southern end of the Bonin Islands, stretching toward the equator, and the Marshall and Caroline groups extend to the east and west along the equator, forming an inverted letter "T" with the Marianas. About 740 miles south of the Bonin Islands lies Saipan, the largest of the Marianas, and about 180 miles farther south is Truk, one of the largest of the Carolines, which marking the crossing point of the inverted "T", is the center of the mandated territory. The line of 148° east longitude divides the Carolines into the West Carolines, with Palau and Yap, and the East Carolines, with Truk and Ponape. Because of the distances between the islands and the extensive area covered by them, communications are difficult. The fact that each group of isles uses different words peculiar to itself sufficiently demonstrates the degree to which they are separated.